



Niagara Falls, from the Canadian side.

Frontispiece.

THE FALLS
OF
NIAGARA

WITH SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTERS ON

THE OTHER FAMOUS CATARACTS
OF THE WORLD.

BY
GEORGE W. HOLLEY.

With Illustrations.

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To the Memory
OF
MY DEPARTED FRIENDS,
PETER A. PORTER
AND
JOEL R. ROBINSON.

The former,
ANSWERING THE SUMMONS TO THE BATTLE-FIELD,
GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY.

The latter
OFTEN RISKED HIS OWN LIFE IN SAVING
THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

GEORGE W. HOLLEY.

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PREFACE.

THE writer, having resided in the village of Niagara Falls for more than a third of a century, has had opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with the locality, and to study it with constantly increasing interest and admiration. Long observation enables him to offer some new suggestions in regard to the geological age of the Falls, their retrocession, and the causes which have been potent in producing it; and also to demonstrate the existence of a barrier or dam that was once the shore of an immense fresh-water sea, which reached from Niagara to Lake Michigan, and emptied its waters into the Gulf of Mexico.

Whoever undertakes to write comprehensively on this subject will soon become aware of the weakness of exclamation points and adjectives, and the almost irre-

sistible temptation to indulge in a style of composition which he cannot maintain, and should not if he could. So far as the writer, yielding to the inspiration of his theme, and in opposition to all resolutions to the contrary, may have trespassed in this direction, he bares and bows his head to the severest treatment that the critic may adopt. His labor has been one of love, and in giving its results to the public he regrets that it is not more worthy of the subject.

As it is hoped that the work may be useful to future visitors to the Falls, and also possess some interest for those who have visited them, it seemed desirable to avoid the introduction of notes and the citation of authorities. For this reason several paragraphs are placed in the text which would otherwise have been introduced in notes. This is especially true of the chapters of local history.

The writer is especially indebted to the Hon. Orsamus H. Marshall, of Buffalo, for a copy of his admirable "Historical Sketches," and for access to his library of American history. The Documentary History and Colonial Documents of the State of New York, "The Relations of the Jesuits," the works of other early French missionaries, travelers, and adventurers, made familiar to the public by the indefatigable labors of Shea and Parkman, have all helped to make the writer's task comparatively an easy one.

Several years ago, the body of this work, which has since been revised and considerably enlarged, was published in a small volume, that has long been out of print. Believing that the interest of the volume would be enhanced for the reader if he were able to contrast Niagara Falls with other famous falls, cataracts, and rapids, the writer has added chapters, describing the most noted of these in all parts of the world.

G. W. H.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y.
September, 1882.

